

STATEMENT OF  
THE HONORABLE ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON  
DECEMBER 15, 2009  
Joint Oversight Hearing with the Committee on Ways and Means on the  
Recovery Act Project to Replace the  
Social Security Administration's National Computer Center  
Woodlawn, Maryland

I am pleased to sit with the Ways and Means Committee Members and John Tanner, Chair of the Social Security Subcommittee concerning the National Computer Center at Woodlawn, MD. The Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management has jurisdiction over the GSA, which has been allocated \$5.5 billion by The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-5) ("Recovery Act"), to convert federally owned GSA buildings into high performance green buildings.

Because the GSA is the federal government's expert real estate and construction agency, GSA also assists other agencies in construction projects in the rare case when these agencies receive direct appropriations for construction. Today's hearing will focus on a partnership formed by two federal agencies, the General Services Administration and the Social Security Administration, to provide a new facility for the Social Security Administration, using a full and open competitive process. The Recovery Act provided \$500 million for the Social Security Administration (SSA) to replace the National Computer Center (NCC), its national computer processing and data storage facility, located in Woodlawn Maryland. This amount is expected to cover the cost the new facility and part of the cost of equipping it. The existing Center is nearly thirty years old, is housed in an antiquated building and is very energy inefficient. This facility is inadequate to meet the

service needs of a modern 21 century computer facility in addition to significant energy issues inherent in an old facility. The security of 450 million records of earnings and benefit data for almost 56 million beneficiaries is severely compromised in the present structure.

The Recovery Act provisions for energy efficient repairs and construction is a classic example of stimulus spending by government that has the best record for meeting the three stimulus tests simultaneously: (1) to provide jobs; (2) to stimulate the economy broadly; and (3) to meet the existing responsibilities of government for infrastructure. This job creation bill is helping to revive the construction sector of our economy, and the infrastructure jobs created, in turn, are feeding and helping revive other sectors down the line.

The National Computer Center is an example of the best and most efficient use of Recovery funds. Not only will this construction support job creation, but in addition the Federal Building Fund will benefit from annual rent payments from the facility to help keep federal buildings in good repair, while the SSA will benefit from a highly efficient and modern facility whose operations are vital to the American people.

We will look closely at the GSA-SSA partnership for lessons that can assist us with similar federal agency partnerships. I look forward to learning from today's witnesses and to being of assistance with this project.